

**Latin America During the National Period (HIST 140):
With a view toward the Caribbean**

“Poor people inhabit rich lands”

– E. Bradford Burns

Spring 2008, Truman State University
MC 209, TR 1:30-2:50
Office: KB 225A

Marc Becker
marc@truman.edu
Office Hours: W 1:30-3:30
Phone: x6036

Description

This course surveys the history of Latin America with a particular emphasis on the Caribbean basin. We will examine a variety of issues including economics, democracy, racism, class structures, gender, ethnicity, human rights, globalization, and popular movements. Rather than analyzing Latin America from a North American point of view, we will examine how Latin Americans view themselves and how their culture, economics, and politics have developed in different directions than the United States and Europe.

This course fulfills the History mode of inquiry in the Liberal Studies Program. In this mode, students will study a broad topic or major geographic area over an extended period of time and will demonstrate competence in one or more of the following areas, which characterize the work of historians:

1. thinking in terms of causation, change over time, contingency, context, and chronological frameworks;
2. the content and methodologies of humanistic and social-scientific disciplines to study and interpret the past;
3. analyzing the interplay between choices individuals have made and developments societies have undergone; and
4. understanding the social and aesthetic richness of different cultures.

Requirements

Our goal in this class is to challenge existing assumptions, engage alternative viewpoints, and encourage critical thinking. Through the study of history, we seek to empower ourselves to be better citizens, and to provide ourselves with the skills necessary to play a positive and educated role in society. We need to be active constituents rather than mere recipients of our education. To accomplish those tasks, we should strive to create an open and supportive learning environment. Regular attendance and active participation are also necessary. Please drop me a note if you are unable to attend, or if you have any concerns or suggestions for improving the class.

Study Abroad in the Caribbean

Consider joining a three-week, six-credit study abroad course “Sweet Power: Sugar, Empires, and Slaves in the Caribbean” planned for May-June 2008. More information is at <http://www2.truman.edu/~sdr/SweetPower08.htm>.

Readings

Following are the required books for this class. Read the assignments before class so that you are prepared to carry on an intelligent discussion of the material in class. Lectures and discussions will complement the readings and assume the base level of knowledge which they present, so it is critically important that you keep up with the readings. Do not wait until the last minute to buy these books since about half-way through the semester the bookstore will return unsold copies to the publisher.

Casas, Bartolomé de las. *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. ISBN: 0-8018-4430-4

Dubois, Laurent and John D. Garrigus, ed. *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804: A brief history with documents*. Bedford Series in History and Culture. Boston, MA ; New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martins, 2006. ISBN: 0-312-41501-X

Ellner, Steve. *Rethinking Venezuelan Politics: Class, Conflict, and the Chavez Phenomenon*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2008. ISBN: 978-1588265265 (\$26.50, note that this is a special paperback bookstore price, probably cheaper than available online)

Gott, Richard. *Cuba: A New History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004. ISBN: 0300111142

Heuman, Gad. *The Caribbean*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. ISBN: 0340763639

Assignments and grades

Course grades will be based on the following assignments. You can check your grade progress on the class Blackboard web page (there is a total of 1000 possible points in the class). More detailed information on the written assignments will be posted to the Blackboard web page. I do not accept “drop and run” papers. Grades on late assignments will be penalized 10 percent for each day that they are late. Successful completion of all assignments is required to receive credit for this class.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Daily identification terms (5 pts ea.)	100 pts
15 newspaper article analyses (10 pts ea.)	150
Las Casas essay (Feb 5)	150
Midterm exam (Feb 26)	150
Haiti essay (March 18)	150
Venezuela essay (May 1)	150
Final exam (May 6)	150

Daily identification terms. We will begin each class period with identifying and giving the significance of one identification term drawn from a list posted to the Blackboard web page for

each of the weekly assigned readings. These will be graded on a scale of 1 to 5 points. One point means that you are present, 2 points indicate that something was fundamentally wrong with your response, 3 points indicate a rote response from the text, 4 points represent analytical thought, and 5 points are for responses that reveal critical thought that extends significantly beyond the text and places the term in a broad historical context.

Newspaper reports. Each week by noon on Thursday post an analysis of a newspaper article from the previous week on Latin America from one of the 3 daily newspapers distributed on campus (*New York Times*, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, or *USA Today*) to the discussion board on the Blackboard web page. Briefly describe the content of the article and then analyze its historical, social, and political significance. Be sure to include the title and author (if given) of the article, the name of the newspaper, and the date it was published, and the section/page numbers. Place the title of the article in the subject line of the post so that subsequent analyses on the same article are together in one thread. The critiques will be graded on a scale similar to the daily identification terms.

Essays. Three essays are due during the course of the semester. For the first essay, examine Bartolomé de las Casas' attitudes toward the Indigenous peoples of the Americas (February 5). For the second, compare responses to slavery across the Caribbean (March 18). The final essay is on the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela (May 1). For all the essays, draw on the assigned readings, films, and class discussions. The essays should be three pages long, typed, double spaced, follow good essay form (have an intro, thesis, conclusion, etc.) and include citations, a bibliography, and page numbers.

Exams. The midterm and comprehensive final exams will draw on the class readings, films, and discussions.

Class Schedule

Week 1 (Jan 15/17) Introduction

Read: Jan Knippers Black, "Introduction: Understanding the Persistence of Inequity," in *Latin America, its Problems and its Promise a Multidisciplinary Introduction*, 4th ed., ed. Jan Knippers Black (Boulder Colo.: Westview Press, 2005), 1-20 (on the Blackboard web page).

Week 2 (Jan 22/24) Arawaks and Caribs

Read: Heuman, ch. 1

Week 3 (Jan 29/31) Conquests

Read: Gott, ch. 1; Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies*

Week 4 (Feb 5/7) Empires

Read: Gott, ch. 2
Assignment due: Las Casas essay

Week 5 (Feb 12/14) Slavery
Read: Heuman, ch. 3-4

Week 6 (Feb 19/21) Independence
Read: Heuman, ch. 5-6

Week 7 (Feb 26/28) Midterm Exam (Feb 26)
Read: Heuman, ch. 7

Week 8 (March 4/6) Haitian Revolt
Read: Dubois/Garrigus, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean*

Week 9 (March 18/20) 1898
Read: Gott, ch. 3, Appendix B; Heuman, chs. 8-11
Assignment due: Haiti essay

Week 10 (March 25/27) Nationalism
Read: Gott, *Cuba*, ch. 4; Heuman, chs. 12-14

Week 11 (April 1/3) Cuban Revolution
Read: Gott, chs. 5-6; Heuman, ch. 15

Week 12 (April 8/10) Immigration
Read: Gott, ch. 7; Heuman, ch. 16

Week 13 (April 15/17) Culture
Read: Gott, ch. 8; Heuman, ch. 17

Week 14 (April 22/24) Bolivarian Revolution
Read: Ellner, *Rethinking Venezuelan Politics*

Week 15 (April 29/May 1) Final reviews
Assignment due: Venezuela essay

Final Exam Tuesday, May 6, 11:30-1:20